



Barry-Eaton District Health Department

Be Active • Be Safe • Be Healthy

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January is Cervical Health Awareness Month

January is cervical health awareness month and, although it may sound like this topic is solely focused on women, there are actually steps both men and women can take to prevent cervical cancer! HPV (human papillomavirus) is a very common virus that spreads through sexual activity. It's also a major cause of cervical cancer and can also cause anal cancer, throat cancer and genital warts in both men and women. About 14 million Americans, including teens, become infected with HPV each year, but many people with HPV don't know they are infected.

The good news?

- The HPV vaccine (a series of 2 or 3 shots) for all genders **can prevent HPV**. According to the CDC, nationwide, 6 out of 10 parents are choosing to get the human papillomavirus vaccine for their children.
- Cervical cancer can often be prevented with regular screening tests (called Pap tests) and follow-up care.

In honor of National Cervical Health Awareness Month, The Barry-Eaton District Health Department (BEDHD) encourages:

- Individuals to talk with their health care provider and **stay current** on cervical cancer screening.
- Women to start getting regular Pap tests at age 21.
- All individuals to check to see if they are eligible for the HPV vaccine.

The vaccine is most effective when given at the recommended age of 11-12 years so they are protected before ever being exposed to the virus; however, it can be given to women up to age 26 and men up to age 21.

BEDHD connects women to breast and cervical cancer screening services through the Michigan Breast and Cervical Cancer Control and Navigation Program (BCCCNP). If you need cervical cancer screening or have an abnormal mammogram or Pap test and your insurance doesn't completely pay for additional tests, visit our website for qualification guidelines or call (616) 632-7283 or (888) 515-1300 ext. 7283 in Barry County or (517) 887-4364 or (877) 221-6505 in Eaton County.

Most health insurances pay for the HPV vaccine, including Medicaid and the Healthy Michigan Plan. If you or your child do not have insurance that covers vaccines, contact the Barry-Eaton District Health Department at 517-541-2630 in Eaton County or 269-798-4133 in Barry County for low cost vaccine options. For more information, visit www.barryeatonhealth.org or visit us on [Facebook!](#)